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## →CONTRIBUTED ❖ NOTES.◄

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**Diqduq.**—The word דִּקְדּוּק is derived from the root דִּקַּק which signifies to beat small, to crush, to pulverize, whence the noun דֶּק a thin covering, a veil, and the adjective דֶּק fine, thin, small, subtle, etc. Although the verb itself, and its cognates and derivatives, are classical Hebrew, yet the term דִּקְדּוּק is altogether of rabbinical origin. In a figurative sense, the verb signifies to discuss, to be exact, or accurate, to analyze, separate, refine, criticise, the noun importing disquisition, accuracy, or exactness. Buxtorf, in his lexicon, defines דִּקְדּוּק thus, “*Subtilis et accurata disquisitio, grammatica.*” The term was appropriated by the Jewish doctors of the Middle Ages to designate *grammar*, and has been applied to that department of scientific study by the Jewish grammarians ever since. “Grammar,” says G. J. Vossius, “is called by the rabbis דִּקְדּוּק, that is *subtilitas*, because it treats accurately, and in a refined manner, with utmost precision, the letters, points, inflections, and entire nature and constitution of words in the Hebrew language.” So Buxtorf, “Grammar is the *ars bene loquendi Hebrais, hebraice*. In Hebrew, it is called דִּקְדּוּק.” Whoever has studied Hebrew critically, in such grammars as those of Gesenius, Freytag, Hupfeld, Ewald, Stier, Nordheimer, Nägelsbach, or Green, or has been able to read the grammars of Chayug, Kimchi, or Ben Zeeb, will be at no loss to discover the remarkable propriety of the application of the rabbinical term to the critical and philosophical structure of the language, its phenomena, and laws. The term itself also reveals the wonderful critical spirit with which the mediæval Hebrew doctors set about the institution of grammatical science, so far as relates to the holy tongue. It acquaints us with the nature of their study, refined, incisive, exact, examining, with shrewdness and care, the letters and words of the language, their origin, nature, inflection, structure, and relations. This was the charm that constantly engaged their attention, since the era of the Massorite leaders, who, for the most part, contented themselves with the more elementary beginnings of grammatical science, such as connecting the letters, affixing the points and accents, noting the agreement or difference of words, as also their various writing, but not advancing, as did the mediæval scholars, to an observation of the genius of the language, describing its phenomena, ascertaining its laws, anomalies, and analogies, investigating its sources, or causes, and kindred relations, or gathering from the language itself whatever might make for the more sure interpretation of the Sacred Books. The men of the Massora, בְּעֵלֵי הַמְּסוֹרָה, did great service, in their labor to establish a correct text, giving, in doubt-

ful cases, both קרי and כתיב, and by their system of pointing, preserving a true pronunciation, as, by their system of accents, not only indicating the tone-syllable, dividing the sentence, regulating the cantillation, and transmitting, in many important cases, the traditional interpretation, thus imparting great precision to the language, and making succeeding ages debtors to their toil. But their work, in comparison with that of the doctors of דקדוק, was rather that which a Priscian and Aristarchus would have called by the name "*Grammaticistica*," not "*Grammatica*." The work, on the other hand, of the noble Jewish scholars, beginning with the Karaite doctors in their contest with the Talmudists, exalted the treatment of the Hebrew language to the dignity of a true science, just such a critical and philosophical דקדוק as the language required. Altling, in his admirable Grammar of the Punctuation of the Holy Tongue, has aptly said, "This is a firm persuasion in my mind, that only then will Hebrew grammar come to be a true דקדוק, *Subtilitas*, when the various reasons of it, and of its pointing, are deduced from the fundamental principles of the language itself,"—an anticipation of the triumphs of more modern times.

Leopold Dukes informs us, in a foot-note to a passage in his *Literaturhistorische Mittheilungen*, that, in the Talmud, there is no distinct technical expression for the word *grammar*. The application of the words דקדוק and מדקדק, the former to *grammar*, the latter to *grammarian*, is of later date. The words are indeed found in the Talmud, but are used simply to signify "to observe with scrutiny," or "to consider accurately," or "observe exactness"—(*Genauigkeit beobachten*) and, in this sense, are employed to designate the faithful following, or followers, of the Mosaic commandments. Subsequently, the term מדקדק came to signify the Hebrew punctator, because of the accuracy required in pointing the text. Dukes also informs us that Rabbi Menaḥem Ben Seruq was the first Jewish author in whom the expressions דקדוק הלשון for grammar, and מדקדקי הלשון for grammarians, of the Holy Tongue, are found. All that is meant, evidently, by this is that, antecedently to Menaḥem, the term דקדוק was not used in combination with the other, a statement supported by abundant evidence drawn from the preceding treatises on grammatical science. The title of Saadia's "Grammatical Works" is מלאכת הדקדוק. The title of one of Rabbi Jonah Ben Giannach's book is *Kitab Al-Luma*, which Ewald renders *Buch der Untersuchung* (*Book of Investigation*) and substantially equivalent to דקדוק. So Munk in his interesting papers in the *Asiatic Journal*, 1851, p. 425, gives the title and explanation of Saadia's work "*Kitab Al-Luma*, c'est-a-dire *Livre du Diquduq*, mot hébreu dont le sens est examen, recherche, et signifie faire des recherches dans la langue." The title given by Aben Ezra to his Hebrew translation of Chayug's grammatical works is ספרי דקדוק *Books of Grammar*, and Chayug himself is denominated ראש המדקדק הראשון *the Chief Grammarian*, and ראש המדקדקים *Chief of Grammarians*. The title of Aben Ezra's own work on grammar is simply

דְּקָדוּקִים which would be appropriately translated by *Grammaticæ Variorum*. More evidence of the same sort could be adduced from the works of Rashi<sup>1</sup> and Kimchi. Bartolucci mentions an anonymous Hebrew grammar, found in the Vatican Library, with the title דְּקָדוּק לְשׁוֹן קוֹדֶשׁ *Grammar of the Holy Language*. Not a few Christian writers on Hebrew grammar have, in imitation of the Hebrew doctors, published their own works under the Hebrew title. This brief notice of *Diqduq* may serve to satisfy the justifiable curiosity of students, or beginners in the study, of the Hebrew language, who may have met with the word unexplained, and desire to know something of its origin and history. It is a synonym for "Scientific Grammar." Kimchi, at the close of his *Michlol*, has a verse which is quoted by both Buxtorf and Bythner, in their grammars, in which the word occurs; a verse containing excellent advice to all students. We subjoin it, for the benefit of such. It is a little sermon.

אֲשֶׁר לָמַד וְתוֹרָה לוֹ לָקַנָּן  
וְלֹא לָמַד יְסוֹר דְּקָדוּק וְלֹא בָן  
כְּמוֹ חוֹרֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר יִנְהֵן שְׂוָרִים  
וְיָדוּ מִבְּלִי מִלָּמַד וְדָרְבָן

which, in Latin dress, appears thus,—

Qui discit, et lex ei (est) in possessionem,  
Et non discit fundamenta *Diqduq*, neque intelligit,  
(Est) sicut arator qui agit boves,  
Et manus ejus (est) sine baculo aut stimulo.

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**Notes on Malachi.**—MAL. I. 3.—The Revisers well translate תַּנּוֹת *jackals* instead of *dragons*, as Luther (*Drachen*) and the Authorized Version have it. The Septuagint has *ὠμαὶ ἐρημῶν dwellings of the desert*. DeWette, and Gesenius in his *Thesaurus*, still translate "domicilia, mansiones;" but Ewald (*Gram.*, § 175b), Köhler, Stier, and others, regard תַּנּוֹת as a feminine form used here instead of the more common תַּנִּים, from the sing. תֵּן *wolf, jackal*, or a similar animal. The preposition לְ can be more readily explained if we translate "jackals," not "habitations."

I. 9.—We prefer the margin, "From your hand" to the text of the Revision, "By your means." The context is: "Entreat God's favor [looking, at the same time, at the polluted offerings which God received from your hands]—will he accept any of your persons?" Compare verse 13, מִיָּדְכֶם, which the Revisers there translate "of your hands."

<sup>1</sup> Not Rashi the Commentator, but Rashi the Grammarian, Jarchi.